

# INITIATION

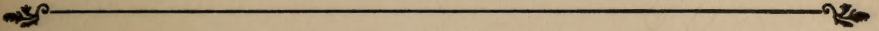
By  
EDWARD P. BUTLER











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A Collection of Poems

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FOREWORD

To the Memory of My Friend

Edward Murray







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## FOREWORD

**T**HOSE who have been reading these scattered poems in manuscript will see that some of them have been revised. This was done less for the sake of beauty than of truth—though each is served by devotion to the other.

The poems, written at various times during the past six years, are arranged in chronological order.

E. P. B.





### To My Book

Conceived in pain; brought forth with joy—  
Child of my only love!

Child of the poorest bride of Christ:  
Sing of Our wondrous love!

Sing to the troubled hearts of men:  
Sing of the peace We won!

Sing of the joy that soul shall know  
Who dwells with God's own Son!



**Of Arcady . . .**

Of Arcady the bards will tell,  
A land of happy hours;  
A land of Golden Sunshine,  
Of running brooks and flowers;  
A land of laughing children  
Where no one e'er is bad,  
Where trouble never enters  
And everyone is glad.  
But there's no such place as Arcady—  
I cannot wish there were:  
What joy could be in Arcady—  
And sorrow never there?



### Creation

God made a little garden  
And hung it in the sky,  
With a myriad lights around it  
On a string He did not tie.

'Twas a wondrous little garden,  
Full of tiny lakes and rills,  
Tiny isles and tiny mainlands,  
Tiny vales and tiny hills.

There were living things made also:  
Tiny trees and tiny flowers—  
I think God used a microscope  
To make this world of ours.

There were swimming things and flying things  
And things that crept or ran—  
All these He made of nothing  
And then—created man!

Man and woman, strong and beautiful,  
By Satan were beguiled,  
And so, to win them back again,  
He made a simple Child.

### Days

I have a little fairy friend  
And, when the skies are grey,  
She flies into the dimming past  
To seek a Golden Day.

Now Golden Days are rare days,  
As all old sinners know,  
And oft times they are buried deep  
Among the Days of Woe. . .

I sent my elfin friend this morn  
To scan the troubled years  
But weary came she back tonight,  
Her bright eyes filled with tears—

“A million ugly hours I dragged  
From off a heap of Time—  
I found tonight a Golden Day  
All covered o’er with grime.

“And, though I bathed her pallid form  
And dressed her—most like new,  
She sighed and said that she was tired—  
Would come no more to you.”

I comforted the sobbing elf—  
“Wipe all our tears away:  
Tomorrow, dear, we two shall try  
To *make* a Golden Day.”

### An Objective

To be lonely with Christ,  
To be sad "unto death,"  
Yet cheered by the Light of His Love;  
To be scourged, to be mocked,  
To be wounded and torn,  
Yet calmed by a Breath from Above;  
To be burdened and goaded  
To Calvary's heights,  
Yet safe in the ugliest storms;  
To be honest and brave  
From the crib to the grave,  
And to die on a cross in His arms.

### Consolation

Weep, Friend of Mine—I would not stay your tears;  
Who has not wept has neither tasted mirth—  
Come! drop the weary burden of the years  
And give the flowing sorrow to the earth.

Tomorrow comes, and soon your heart shall know  
That tranquil joy which only follows woe.  
The eyes that once in soothing tears have lain  
Shall wake to shine as morning after rain.

Weep, Friend of Mine, nor heed the jeers of those  
That hear not, see not, nor may ever sing,  
Because their empty hearts must ever close  
To joys which only sight and hearing bring.

**To a Very Young Friend at Christmas**

Child, from fullest heart I wish you  
All the joy of Christmas Day;  
May the Baby Christ go with you  
All along the troubled way;  
May His love forever keep you  
Straight and strong and undefiled;  
May His holy wisdom find you  
"Like unto" a little child.



### Initiation

Once, deep in a valley of Make-Believe,  
Near a grove of nameless trees,  
He fashioned a bower of vagrant dreams  
And childhood memories.

Then, pleased with his work—he was hungry too,  
He cried to the World: “Come in!  
And see what a friend has made for you  
That he your love may win.”

The World came in, and wept, and smiled—  
“Now fortune to you steers:  
A nickle a smile for smiles we’ll pay  
And a dollar a bucket for tears.”

A moment he dreamed; and then, through the mist,  
He spoke—and his heart was lead:  
“My soul I can’t sell; but, since I must live,  
I’ll give you my blood instead.”

He bound his body to brutal toil  
And dragged the years along;  
And ever his bleeding heart grew weak  
And ever his soul grew strong. . .

There came a day, like the Judgment Day—  
He knew that the heart was done:  
He faced the drunken vampire there,  
As strong as the noontide sun.

"Blind Tyranny," he cried, "I'm free!  
My soul can live on Love:  
Henceforth I strain for a priceless gain—  
My Master dwells above."

And now, on a mountain of ageless Truth,  
He is building a Tower of Hope,  
With beacon lights in its glorious heights  
To guide you up the slope.

## Wonder

I've lived and I've learned in this valley of tears  
Till I'm old enough to die;  
But "the world is so full of a number of things"  
That I can't look wise, if I try.  
My baby stare makes the babies smile  
When they meet me on a lark,  
And the shadow the sun before me throws  
Is an exclamation mark.  
Though under the skies there is nothing new,  
There is more than ever I'll see:  
The winds and the waves may be old to the sun;  
They can never be old to me.  
From the gentlest breath to the howling gale;  
From the quiet splash to the maelstrom's flood;  
From the calm content of a soul at rest  
To the whirl of thought and the rush of blood—  
O blind were the man who would count and name,  
As the fruits in his field or his herds on the lea,  
The numberless tides and the nameless moods  
That rise in the deeps of the air and the sea!

### Courage

Strive, though the field be lost, my friend;  
Stand, though the heavens crack;  
E'en though you cannot strike, my friend,  
Come back, and back, and back!

Stand up, as often as you fall,  
And, when you cannot rise,  
Still turn your face against the foe  
And fight him with your eyes!

You cannot win? What matters that?  
Lose bravely—that is more.  
Who flies from the invincible  
Has much to learn of war!

### A Poet's Prayer

God, raise my eyes to the dancing stars;  
God, fill my heart with a mighty mirth;  
God, slip for me Thy heaven's bars:  
God, keep my feet on solid earth!



## Conquest

Ragged and bald the great hill rose  
Against the morning sky,  
Majestic, stern, impregnable,  
Precipitous and high.  
In pride of heart the youth sprang up—  
“I own nor bond nor tie. . .  
Say—what is life? Or what is death?  
I climb yon hill and die!”

Defeated, small, beneath his feet  
At sunset lay the hill—  
As if in fear to cower and shrink  
From that unbroken will.  
A tempest raged within his brain  
Which only God could quell:  
In ecstasy of pride, he screamed—  
Then stumbled, slipped, and fell.

Majestic, mild, the mountain stood  
Amid the morning rain,  
A gentle victor, gloating not  
On conquest nor on gain.  
The boy, in wondrous peace, arose  
To dare the heights again—  
A pilgrim, walking with his God  
Into the hearts of men.

### The New Tenant

The Great One came, and begged of me a house,  
A place of rest where He might comfort find,  
When weary of the insults of His foes  
Or wounded by the coldness of the blind.

"One house I hold," said I, "a sorry thing:  
The latest tenant was a clumsy fool,  
Who plastered ugly pictures on its walls  
And stuck the ceiling full of printed drool.

"He cluttered all the floor with worthless toys,  
Let gathering dust shut out the Living Ray,  
Veneered the roof and sides with flimsy stuff,  
Which even now the winds do tear away.

"A dreary place, deep-stained throughout by dirt  
And smoke and every other soiling thing:  
'Twould never make, I'm sure, a fitting home  
To rest and soothe a Great though weary King."

He smiled—" 'Tis well: We'll sweep it out today,  
And scrape and scrub and scald the whole inside,  
Polish the lights, bring beauty into all—  
And it is ready! There will I abide.

"Without, the winds and rain shall have their way.  
The stains—all these must find Our house poor stead  
When into every nook stream Light and Love:  
So come, My friend; thy Tenant wakes the dead!"

### **My Angel Held . . .**

My angel held me close to him all day.  
I did not see nor feel him then, nor now;  
But he is here—he bathed my fevered brow  
And bound my wounded feet, upon the way.  
Then, when my Lover left me there astray  
And Satan laughed to see my sorry part,  
He crushed my blubb’ring mouth against his heart,  
Lest God should hear the madness I would say.

And now I know: some night when there are stars,  
His hold shall tighten round me suddenly;  
We’ll bid farewell for aye to earthly wars;  
With his strong arms he’ll wrench my spirit free;  
He’ll break the cord that binds me to this clod  
And bear me to the very feet of God!

Note: Christ, the Divine Lover of the soul, often leaves her desolate and apparently without guidance, in order to make her understand more perfectly her utter dependence on Him.

\* *Hope*

What matter yesterday's clouds  
Or today's bleak rain?  
Another dawn must break soon  
With Sunshine again!

What matter dark, white days,  
When the blue imps sing?  
The snow is gone tomorrow  
With the bright Sun of Spring!

What matter all our tears  
Or the heart's deep hurt?  
We face Eternal Morning  
With our loins strong-girt!

\* Written in collaboration with Marguerite M. Hutchison.  
It is really her poem.

To . . .

Brother of mine, you lost: but shall I weep?  
Brother, you failed: but must I be ashamed?  
Can human heart command the broken mind?  
Shall fallen rider for his horse be blamed?

Though, in the darkness of your wounded brain,  
You forced a way to premature release,  
Who knows you did not in that dreadful hour  
Awake, at last, to find your God, and peace?



### Another Prayer

God, I am mad, with pride of mind and heart;  
God, I am weak, from foolish waste of love:  
God, *Thou* art Wise—send, then, Thy Lamb, Thy Dove;  
God, Thou art Strong—grant me in Thee a part!

Note: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . and thy neighbour as thyself *for the love of God.*” This is the perfect law of love. Whatever love does not conform to it is waste.

**You Ask Why I . . . ?**

You ask why I advance with joy  
Where all the world finds only woe—  
Where Hell is watching to destroy?  
You wonder that I long to go?

Because my foes await me there  
Shall I deplore my soul's escape?  
Because the goal can mean despair  
Must I then shun the winning tape?

This is the word! There is no death  
Which is not born of base distrust!  
That is not death which men call death:  
It is the bridal of the just!

### Finale

It is so long, the night—so black!  
This forest holds heart-stifling danger.  
Wild, unclean voices taunt the stranger.  
In this dread wood is there no track?

God, it is dark. Can daylight come?  
I am afraid—I, the death-scorning. . .  
But brother! Look—through the mist of the morning,  
The welcoming lights of home!

Note: Joy needs to be shared—there is no other reason for Creation. Is it then wrong to conceive that the soul, after her agony, should turn involuntarily towards the friends she has left behind?

### God, Do I Love . . . ?

God, do I love at all—I who am wont  
To walk the ways of men, and prate aloud  
Of love, and dance to Thee before the crowd,  
Like some poor clown enamoured of his stunt?  
God, *can* I love Thee—I, inflated runt,  
Who every hour forget my nothingness  
And rise and call the world to kneel and bless  
The King Who for its heart rides forth to hunt?

I know not: but, dear God, take all my *things*. . .  
My life? It is the *least* I give to Thee:  
Take Thou my name, and all my friends, and then,  
If Thou still doubt the heart of him who sings  
Of love, let Thy hand fall—let my songs be  
As if they never were nor could have been!







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*A Collection of Poems*  
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